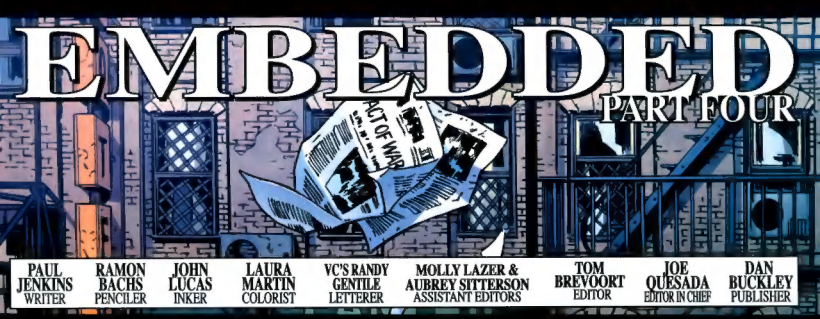
EMBEDDED
PART FOUR



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THE PRO-REGESTRATION FORCES GOT WHAT THEY *WANTED*, DIDN'T THEY? NOTHING BETTER THAN A FEW CORPSES TO GET PEOPLE LOOKING THE OTHER WAY. AND ANOTHER EXPLOSION JUST BIG ENOUGH TO MAKE PEOPLE REMEMBER STAMFORD.
TRY TELLING ME THEY DIDN'T SALIVATE INTO THEIR STEAK DINNERS WHEN THEY FOUND OUT A LAW-ABIDING HERO GOT KILLED BY AN UNREGISTERED COMBATANT.
I WAS *THERE*, BEN. I SAW BANTAM GET KILLED! GEOFFY CRESWELL TOOK PHOTOS. IT WAS LIKE SOME KIND OF STAGED EVENT, ALL WRAPPED UP IN A NICE, NEAT PACKAGE. IT WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME IF SOMEONE PLACED THAT GAS TANKER THERE ON *PURPOSE*--
SALLY, IT'S YOUR JOB TO LOOK AT THIS OBJECTIVELY. YOU'RE A WHOLE DIFFERENT CLASS OF HACK WHEN YOU START *IMAGINING* THE NEWS INSTEAD OF *REPORTING* IT.
"I REMEMBER WHEN THE SILVER SURFER FIRST SHOWED UP. I'D ONLY BEEN ON THE JOB FOR ABOUT A YEAR...I WAS COVERING LOCAL SPORTS AT THE TIME.
"THE SKY WAS ON FIRE FOR DAYS BEFOREHAND... HALF THE ELECTRICAL GRIDS ON THE EAST COAST BLEW OUT.
"THAT EVENT CHANGED THE WAY WE LOOKED AT OURSELVES. I MEAN, THIS WAS OBVIOUSLY AN INTELLIGENCE FAR BEYOND OUR COMPREHENSION. WE WERE NOT ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE."
I DRUNK MYSELF DUMB FOR A YEAR AFTERWARDS, JUST CONSIDERING THE RAMIFICATIONS. BUT I BLAME *MYSELF* FOR THAT, NOT ANYBODY ELSE--
BEN, YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT THEY'RE MAKING A MOCKERY OF THE CONSTITUTION. WE HAVE A DUTY TO MAKE PEOPLE SEE THAT, NO MATTER WHICH NEWS ORGANIZATION WE WORK FOR.
CAFE SHOP
DON'T TAKE THE SITUATION *PERSONALLY*, SALLY. MAKE A JUDGMENT BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE--NOT WHAT YOU *EXPECT* TO SEE--BECAUSE THIS JOB WILL EAT YOU UP AND SPIT YOU OUT IF YOU LET IT.
AND DON'T SAY IT *WON'T*. IT ALREADY *DID*.

TAKE COVER! THEY'RE COMING IN FROM ABOVE!
MISS FLOYD! GET DOWN!
HEY--!
S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENTS--NOBODY MOVE!
UNREGISTERED COMBATANTS--YOU ARE ALL UNDER ARREST!

BATTLESTAR! WE NEED YOU HERE! GET THE REPORTER TO THE EAST PASSAGE!
NO...WAIT! I'M YOUR BEST WITNESS--
YOU! YOU LED THEM HERE, FLOYD. I KNEW YOU COULDN'T BE TRUSTED!
YOU SOLD US DOWN THE RIVER!
NO...I WAS CAREFUL. NO ONE KNEW I WAS COMING!
MISS FLOYD, WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, SHUT YOUR MOUTH AND KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN.
GLADIATRIX! GET DOWN THE PASSAGE. I'LL STAY HERE AND HOLD THEM OFF FROM THE DOOR.
I HOLD YOU PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS WOMAN'S SAFETY!
UNDERSTOOD--
SSSKOW!!

HURF!
HA! OH, HEY...THAT WAS AWESOME! AND THE WINNER FOR THIS WEEK'S "FUNNIEST PRISON BEATING" AWARD GOES TO...
...UH...
...DUDE, DO YOU HAVE A FIRST NAME?
LOOK, EVERYONE! PAINFUL IMPACTS CAN BE FUN!
MARVEL AT HIS SALAMANDER-LIKE REFLEXES!
GIGGLE AT HIS PAINFUL FACE PLANTS!
JUMP BACK IN AMAZEMENT AS HE COMES CRASHING TO THE CANVAS!
YOU'RE DEAD MEAT! YOU HEAR ME, BALDWIN?
I'LL K--
HURK!

AAAA

The Vietnam War

According to the Adjutant General's Center (TACGEN) file dated 1981, the United States suffered over 50,000 fatalities, including over 3000 military personnel who either died in captivity or were MIA. Over 300,000 were wounded.

In 1995, on the twentieth anniversary of the ending of the war, North Vietnam supplied the Agence France Presse with fatality figures of their own: over 1,100,000 KIA, and over 600,000 wounded.

Sometimes the numbers speak for themselves.

The words here are adapted from the song Goodnight Saigon by Billy Joel.
While they reflect the thoughts of a US Marine Corps recruit, it can be said that they reflect the thoughts of every soldier from every war in history...

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